GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2476
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2001
BENEFIT OF HUMAN GENOME STUDY
JAI PRAKASH

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has approved any project to reap the benefit of Human Genome Study conducted at the international level;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the funds allocated for the purpose, project-wise; and

(d) the view point of the Government regarding the establishment of bio-information centres?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a)to(d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2476 FOR 14.3.2001.

Indian Council of medical Research & Department of Bio Technology have initiated major programmes in the area of human Genetics & Genome Analysis during the last decade. However, with the recent announcement of Human Genome Map, it has become necessary that interpretation of genomic knowledge and its application for health sciences has to be taken on priority basis. The Council has, therefore, invited research proposals from large number of research institutions and more than 100 proposal were considered in various areas related to health including development of drugs and vaccines. About 42 proposals have been recommended by committees comprising of experts drawn from various institutes and scientific agencies. A high power Committee will monitor progress of all these studies once sanctioned.

In order to develop further strategy based on the available DNA sequences information from the recently announced human genome sequences and analysis, programmes in the areas of functional genomics, pharmacogenetics, designing custom made drugs, molecular diagnosis methods for various infections, genetic disorders and microbial genomics with focus on identifying virulence gene and target for drug development are also proposed to be undertaken.

The Indian Council of Medical Research also proposes to set up a networking of Bioinformatics centres at Medical Colleges & other medical institutions in the country and disseminate the information to other centres in the country. For the purpose six institutions have been identified in first phase and the networking will be expanded to other centres in the country in future. The Department of Bio-Technology, in addition to the Bioinformatics network comprising 55 centres, has established four sites to assess internationally renowned data bases.